

THE
SHAMBLING

VAMPIRES
ON THE HIGH SEAS!

DC COMICS

JAMES
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THE

SHADE

5



APR 2012

RATED **T+** TEEN PLUS

PULIDO.011

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YOU KNOW, IT'S A FUNNY THING, BUT
WHEN I THINK ABOUT MY LATEST
ADVENTURE--**THIS** PART OF IT,
ANYWAY--IN HINDSIGHT, I REALIZE...

...IT WAS **ALL**
ABOUT **BLOOD**.

HOW CAN YOU
GO ON LIVING
KNOWING
WHAT YOU
ARE?

HOW CAN YOU
NOT TAKE THE
KNIFE TO YOUR
THROAT? NO, I
FORGET, SUCH
A THING
WOULDN'T
KILL YOU. WHY,
THE WOUND
WOULD HEAL
AS QUICKLY
AS IT FORMED.

BUT A
STAKE TO
THE HEART.
THAT
WOULD
WORK.

OR SUNLIGHT.

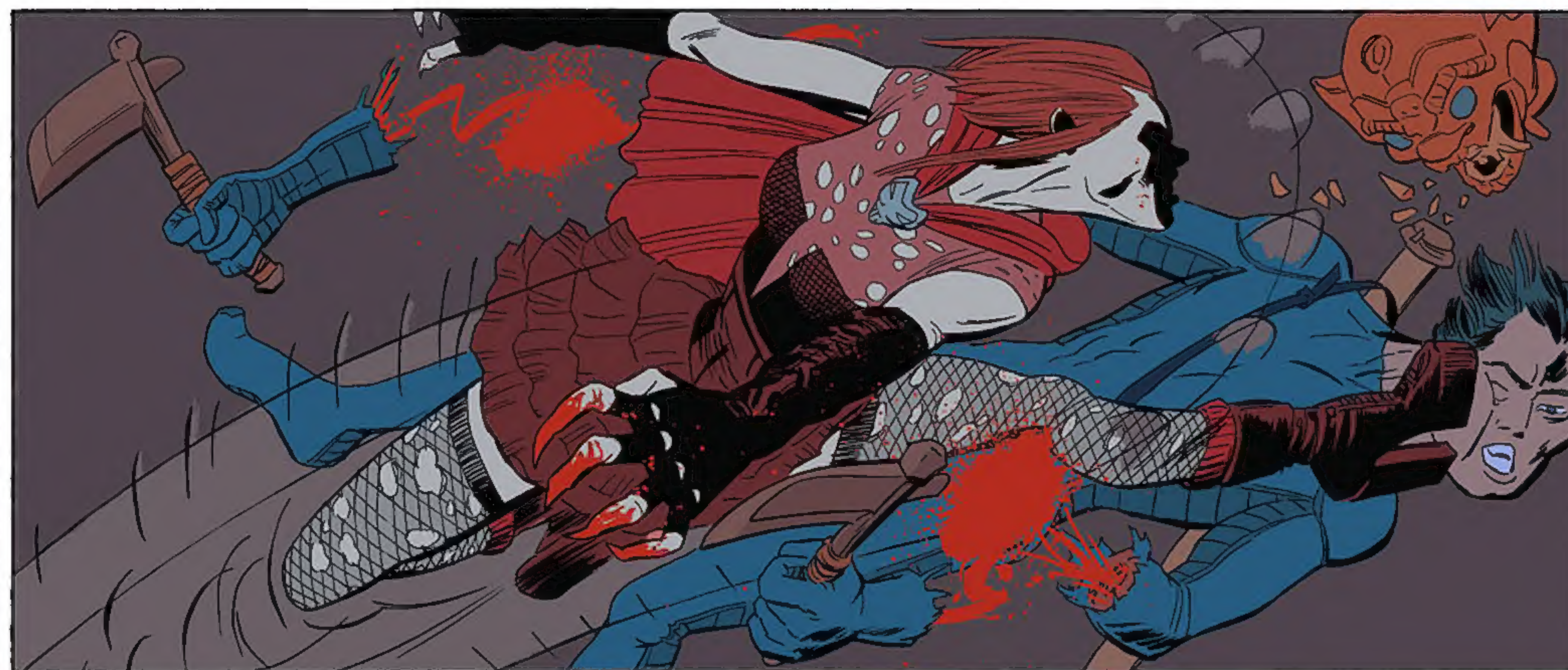
HOW CAN YOU
BEAR TO EXIST,
KNOWING
WHAT YOU ARE?

DEAD.

A DEAD
THING...

...A VAMPIRE.

YOU
DON'T SCARE ME,
MONSTER!



LA SANGRE.
"THE BLOOD."

I SPIT ON THE
PEOPLE WHO
CROWN YOU
THEIR HERO...
THEIR CHAMPION.
THEY OF THE
"CIUTAT VELLA"
WHO CALL YOU
"VERGE DE LA
NIT."

HEROINE QUEEN
OF BARCELONA,
PROTECTOR OF
CATALONIA.

I SPIT ON
THOSE FOOLS,
FOR TO LOVE
YOU IS TO LOVE
DAMNATION.

YES, THESE
VILLAINS, LOS
TOMADORES...
"THE TAKERS"...
THEY WALK
THE PATH OF
GREED, THEY
SIN. ONE OF
THE SEVEN
DEADLY,
GREED,
YES, YES...

...BUT YOU
TRANSCEND
THAT. SIN? WHY,
YOU ARE EVIL
PERSONIFIED.

COME THEN,
FIGHT ME! TAKE ME
IF YOU CAN, CLAWS AND TEETH!
YOU WHORE OF THE
DEVIL!



FIRSTLY, I
PRAY NIGHTLY TO MY
GOD ABOVE.

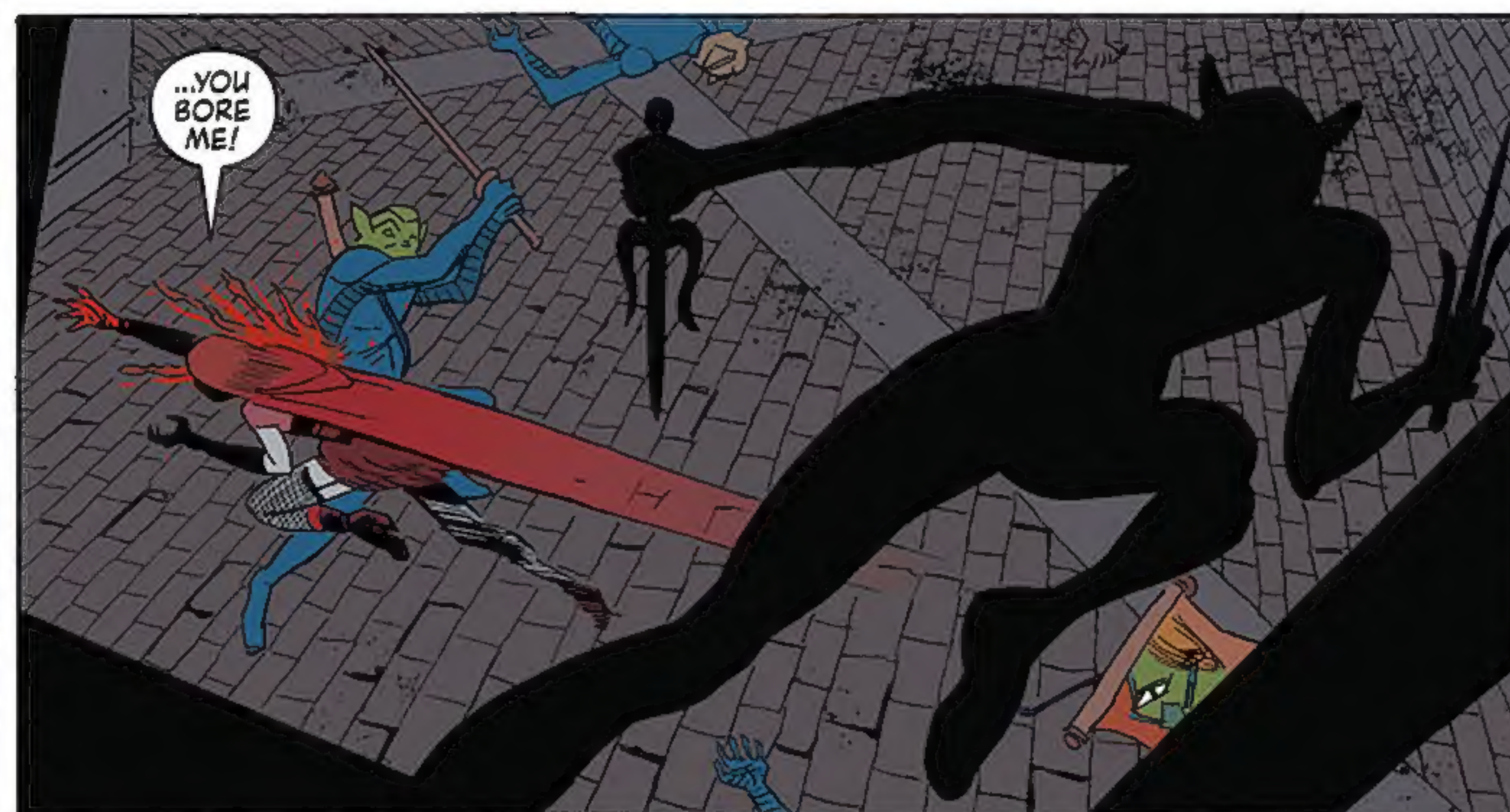
SECONDLY,
I AM NO ONE'S
WHORE. INDEED,
A VIRGIN, I.

I HAVE LIVED MORE
THAN A HUNDRED
YEARS THUS, AND SEE
NO REASON, NO
SHINING KNIGHT, SUCH
THAT THE SAD THING
THAT IS MY LONELY
HEART MIGHT BLOSSOM
OTHER THAN.

AND THIRDLY...
THIRDLY...OH, NO
MATTER...



...YOU
BORE
ME!

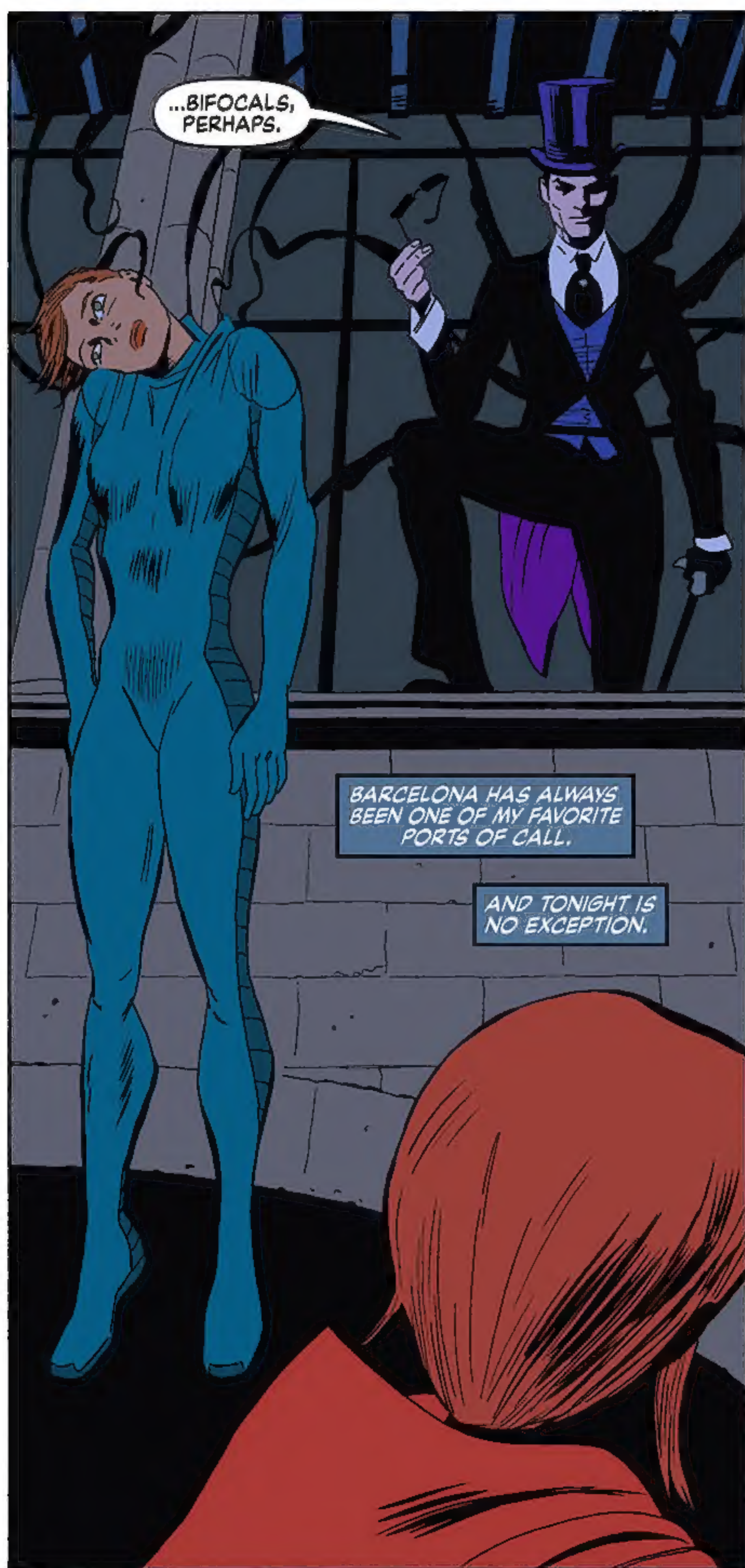


YOU'RE GETTING CLUMSY,
OLD WOMAN. SHALL WE GET
YOUR EYES TESTED? DO YOU
NEED GLASSES...?



BITCH!
MY MAN DIES, SO
YOU TOO--





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HELLO,
GRANDFATHER.

AUSTRALIA. THREE DAYS AGO.



I'M YOUR **GREAT**-GRANDFATHER
AND YOU KNOW IT, DARNELL. IF
WE'RE GOING TO ADDRESS EACH
OTHER IN SUCH FORMAL TERMS,
LET'S USE THE CORRECT
ONES.

I CONFESS
AFTER ALL THIS TIME
I DON'T KNOW WHAT
TO CALL YOU.

LET'S START WITH A
CONVIVIAL CHAT THEN,
HOW ABOUT THAT? SUCH
AS, UM,...I DON'T KNOW,
SAY...**WHY** DID YOU HAVE A
LIZARD GOD TRY TO **KILL**
ME MOMENTS PRIOR,
INSTEAD OF, OH, I DON'T
KNOW...SIMPLY LETTING
ME IN TO SEE YOU?

NOT SURE *WHY* IT ATTACKED YOU, HONESTLY. DON'T KNOW. I'M SORRY IF--

WELL, I THINK IT WAS PROBABLY ME... MY DARKNESS SCARED THE CREATURE. BUT ENOUGH WITH "SORRY," DARNELL, MY BOY, *WHAT* IS GOING ON? I WAS ATTACKED IN MY HOME.

AND LATER I MET A GERMAN PRIVATE DETECTIVE--

VON HAMMER.

VON HAMMER, THAT'S RIGHT. HE SAID HE'D BEEN HIRED BY YOU TO LOCATE BLOOD SAMPLES OF MINE.

WHY? WHY IN GOD'S NAME?

I'M DYING. OBVIOUS LOOKING AT ME, RIGHT?

ERR, I CONFESS YOU'VE LOOKED BETTER.

LEUKEMIA. OLD MAN'S LEUKEMIA. NOT THAT IT'S SO DIFFERENT FROM A CHILD'S, EXCEPT THE RIGORS OF THERAPY... MY DECREPIT FRAME ISN'T UP TO IT.

NOT SO BAD A DEATH, REALLY. CANCER'S MORE PAINFUL. ALZHEIMER'S STEALS DIGNITY. HEART ATTACK, STROKE--NO TIME TO PLAN.

DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'VE *EVER* THOUGHT ABOUT SUCH THINGS, EH, GRANDFATHER? NEVER HAD TO.

ERR... NO.

LUCKY YOU. LUCK *DAMN* YOU. YOU DESERT US, THE FAMILY. ALL YOU LEAVE US ARE TALES... VILLAIN, THIEF, MANIAC, HERO--BIT OF A SURPRISE, THAT LAST ONE...

ASS, I SAY. THOUGHTLESS, SELFISH ASS. LEAVING US WITHOUT--

COUGH

SIGH

IT'S ALL ABOUT BLOOD.

AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINE DANCERS, THE MALES ANYWAY, DAUB EACH OTHER'S BLOOD ON THEMSELVES... AS WELL AS OCHRE, WHICH SYMBOLIZES BLOOD.

THEY BELIEVE THE BLOOD CREATES AN ENERGY CONNECTION TO DREAMTIME.

AND I DON'T KNOW I DISAGREE, WHAT WITH THE IRON IN BLOOD, OCHRE TOO FOR THAT MATTER, AND THE MAGNETIC FIELDS IN THE WORLD. BUT I'M DRIFTING...I DO THAT MORE AND MORE.

YOU BECAME THE SHADE IN 1838, AND FOR SOME YEARS YOU WERE A SUPERHUMAN... AND I STRESS THE WORD *HUMAN*. YOU HAD BLOOD. YOU HAD THE PHYSIOLOGY OF A MAN, BUT WITH SHADOWY POWERS.

THEN SOMETHING HAPPENED A FEW YEARS LATER ON...NO, "A FEW" IS WRONG. TWENTY YEARS ON, YOU CHANGED.

HEAVENS, YOU KNOW *MORE* ABOUT THIS THAN I DO.

YOUR POWERS PERHAPS CONSUMED YOU...ERODED YOUR HUMANITY.

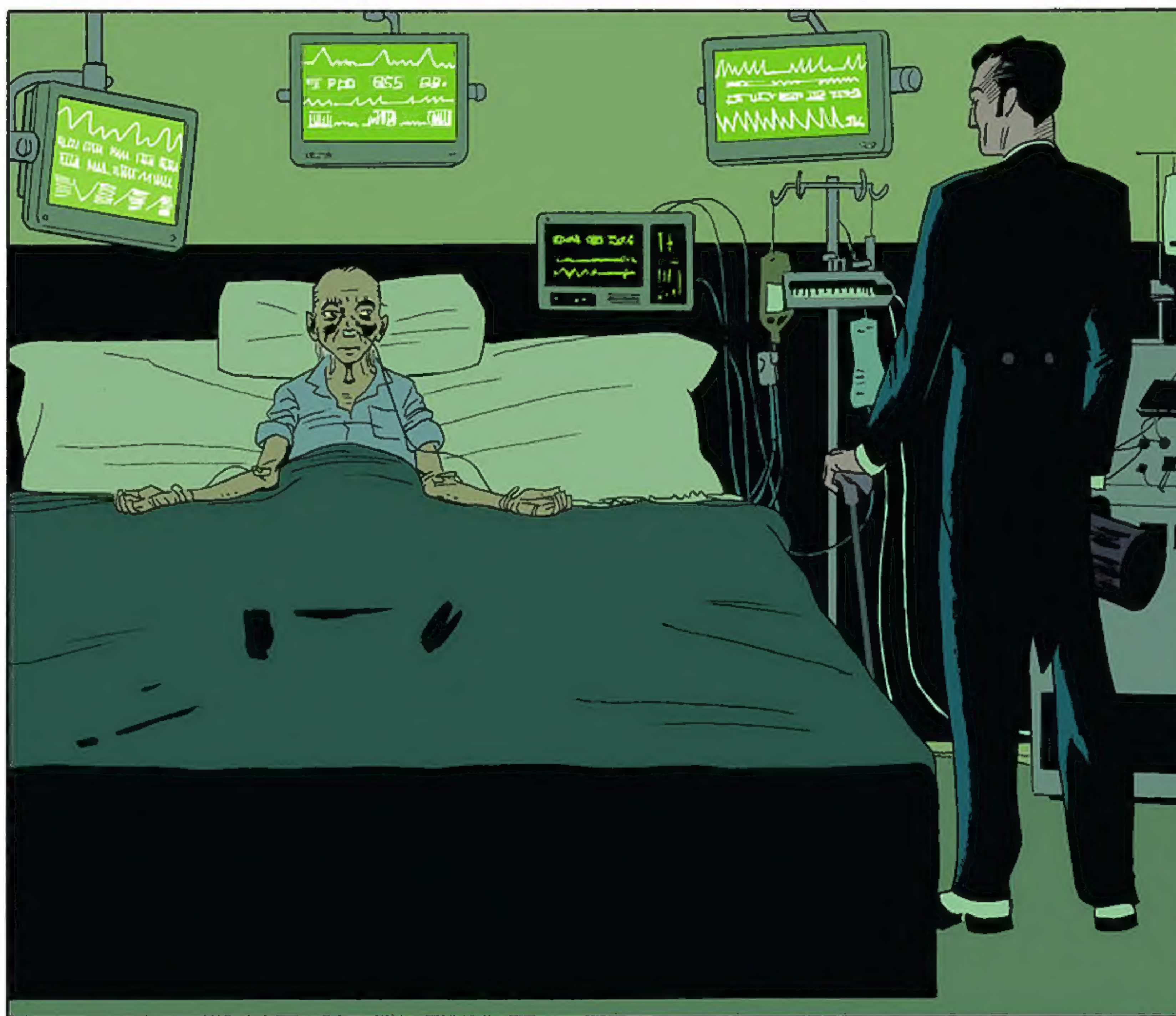
ACTUALLY, IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE...AN OUTSIDE FACTOR, BUT IT'S OF LITTLE MATTER--GO ON.

YOU NO LONGER HAVE BLOOD IN THE CONVENTIONAL SENSE, MERELY DARK ESSENCE.

AND IT'S YOUR BLOOD THAT I NEED.

--IS OVER-RATED.

DEATH? I WELCOME IT, THE PEACE...BE IT HEAVEN'S CHORUS OR BLACK OBLIVION. NO, I SEEK TO MERELY FORESTALL MY PASSING UNTIL I CAN ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS.





QUESTIONS?

WELL, ONE QUESTION, REALLY. WHO WITHIN CALDECOTT...WITHIN THE FAMILY...IS USING THE COMPANY'S RESOURCES FOR NEFARIOUS INTENT?

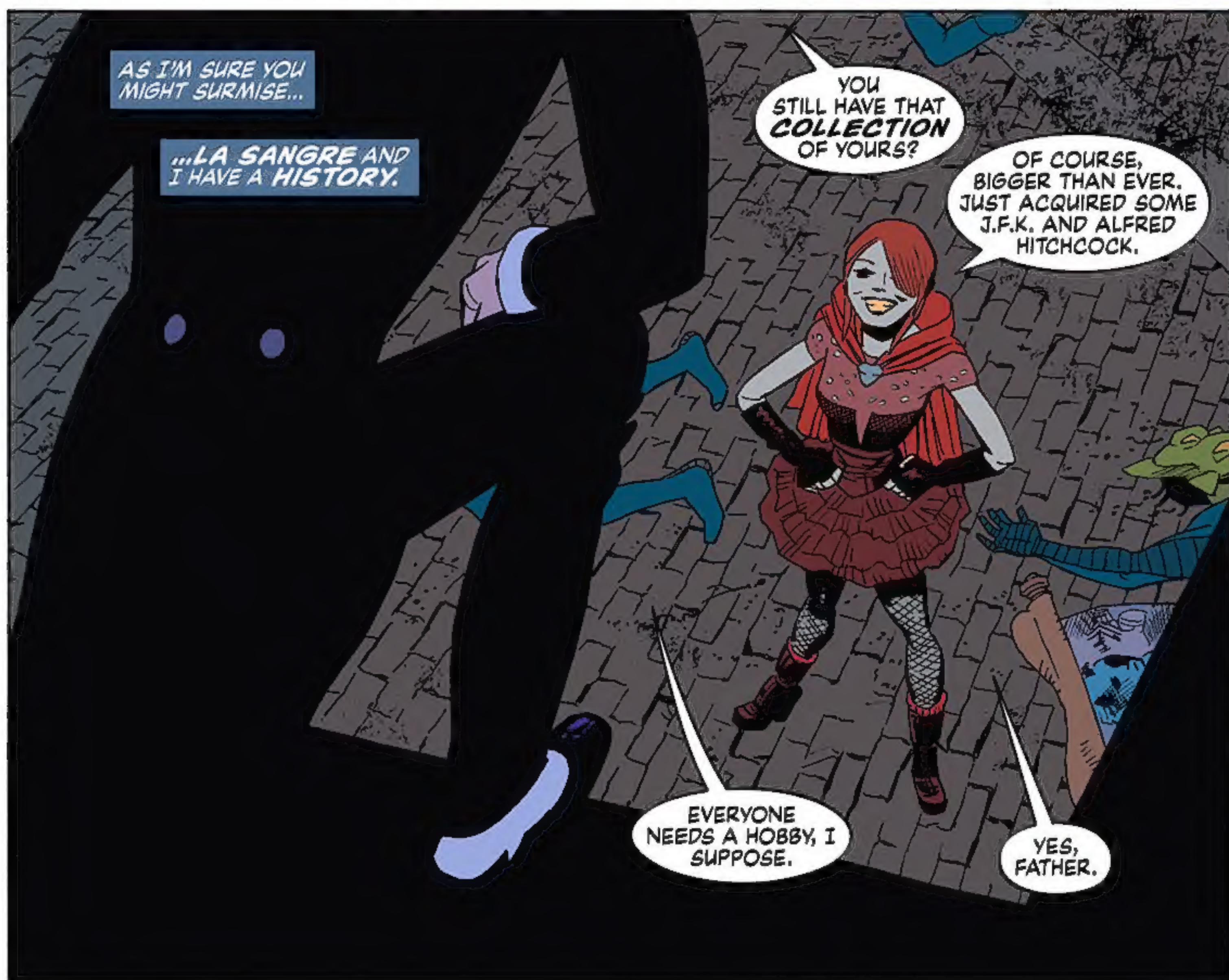


BOTTOM LINE, I SOUGHT YOUR BLOOD... HOPED SOME WAS IN EXISTENCE SOMEWHERE, PRESERVED...HOPED THAT, AS YOU SAY, YOUR UNIQUE CHEMISTRY COMBINED WITH MY HERITAGE MIGHT BUY ME THE TIME TO UNCOVER **WHO** WITHIN THE FAMILY...



...IS USING CALDECOTT INDUSTRIES' MONEY AND SCIENCE TO CREATE THE MEANS FOR A PACT WITH OTHERWORLDLY FORCES WHEREBY HE, SHE, THEY MIGHT RULE THE WORLD.

OH.



AS I'M SURE YOU MIGHT SURMISE...

...LA SANGRE AND I HAVE A HISTORY.

YOU STILL HAVE THAT **COLLECTION** OF YOURS?

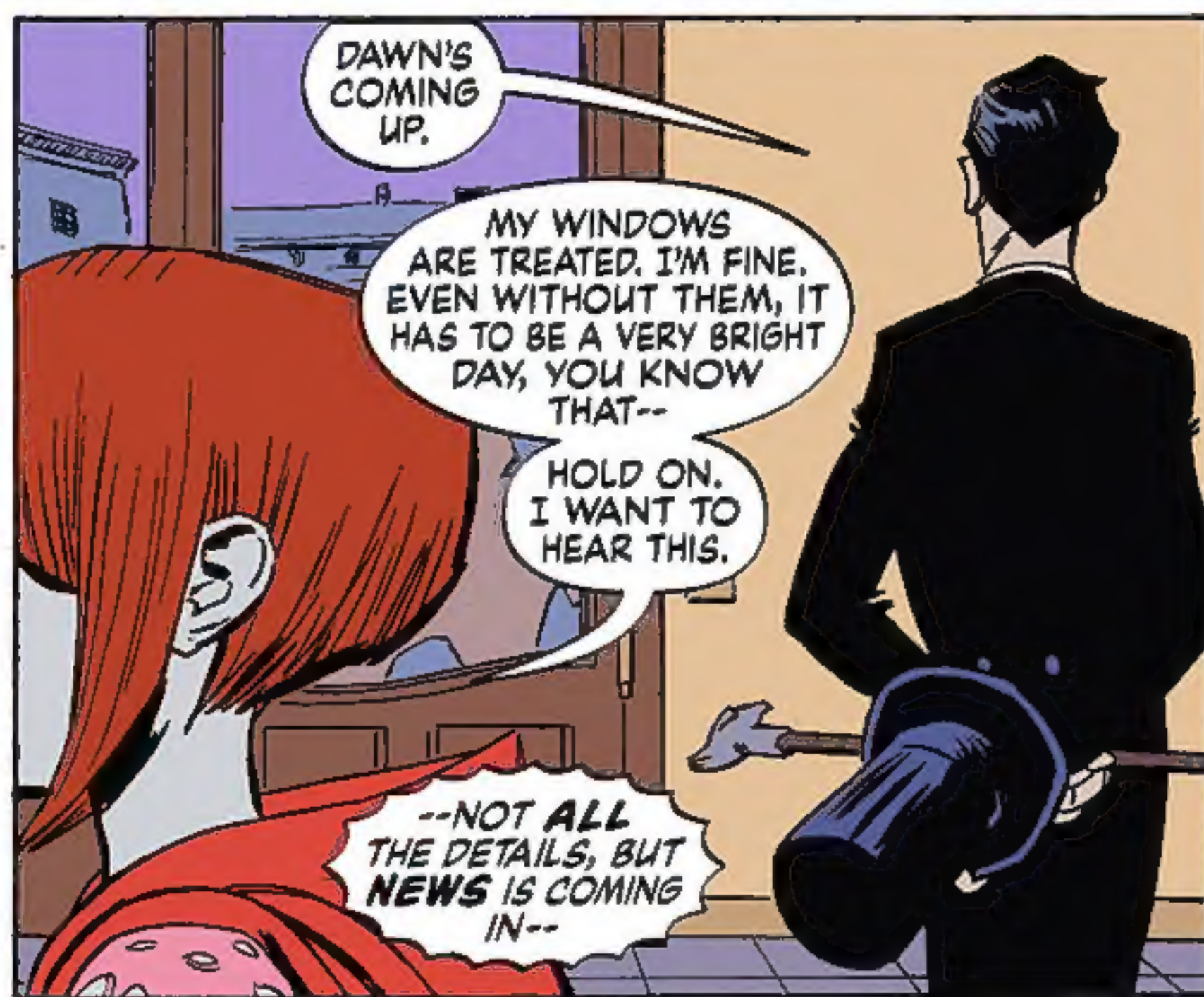
OF COURSE, BIGGER THAN EVER. JUST ACQUIRED SOME J.F.K. AND ALFRED HITCHCOCK.

EVERYONE NEEDS A HOBBY, I SUPPOSE.

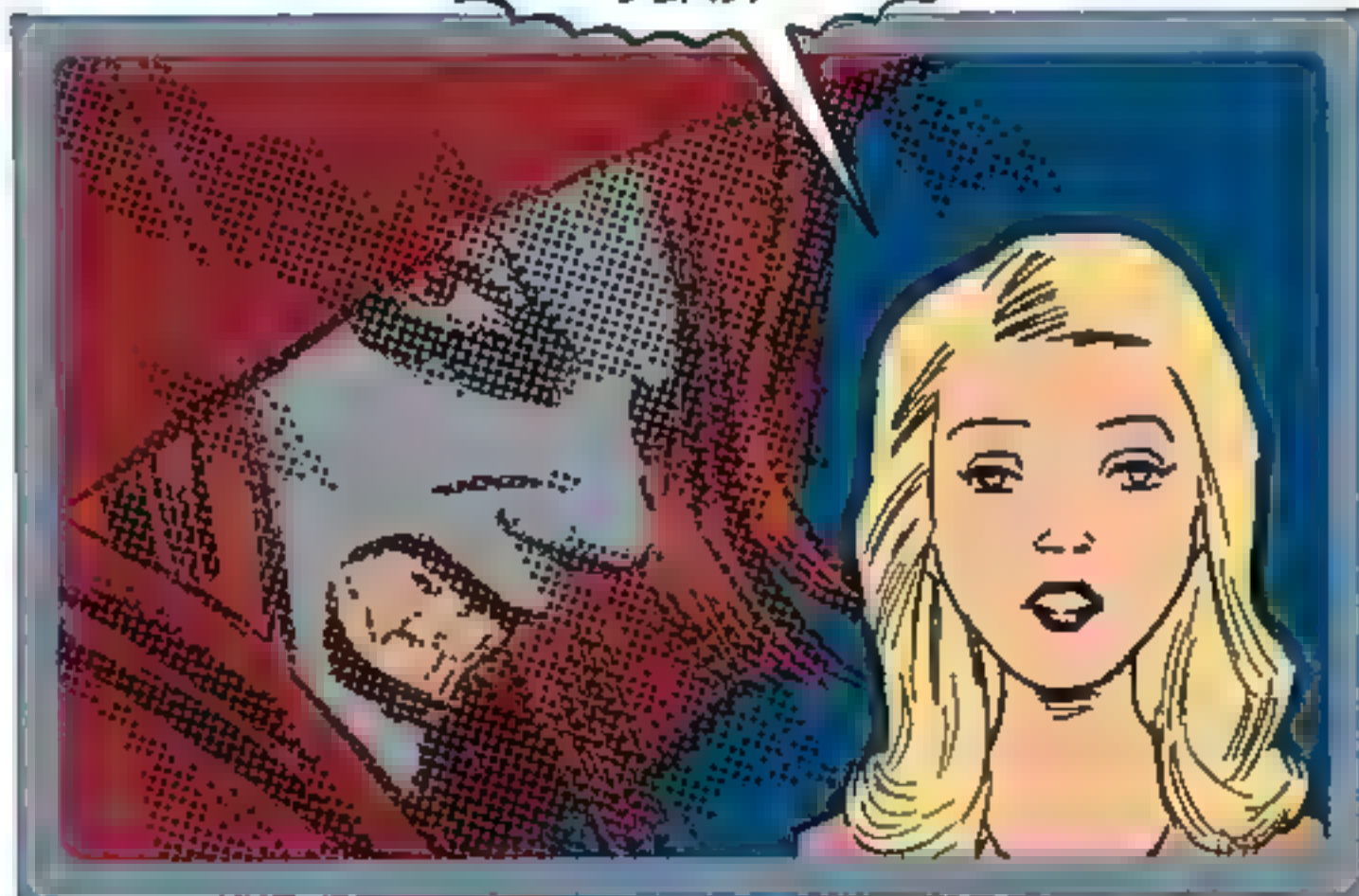
YES, FATHER.



GAUDI'S LA PEDRERA BUILDING.



--THAT THE TAKERS
HAVE BEEN DEFEATED BY
LA SANGRE AFTER THEIR
REIGN OF TERROR OVER
BARCELONA, WHICH HAD
LEFT THIRTY-SEVEN
DEAD.

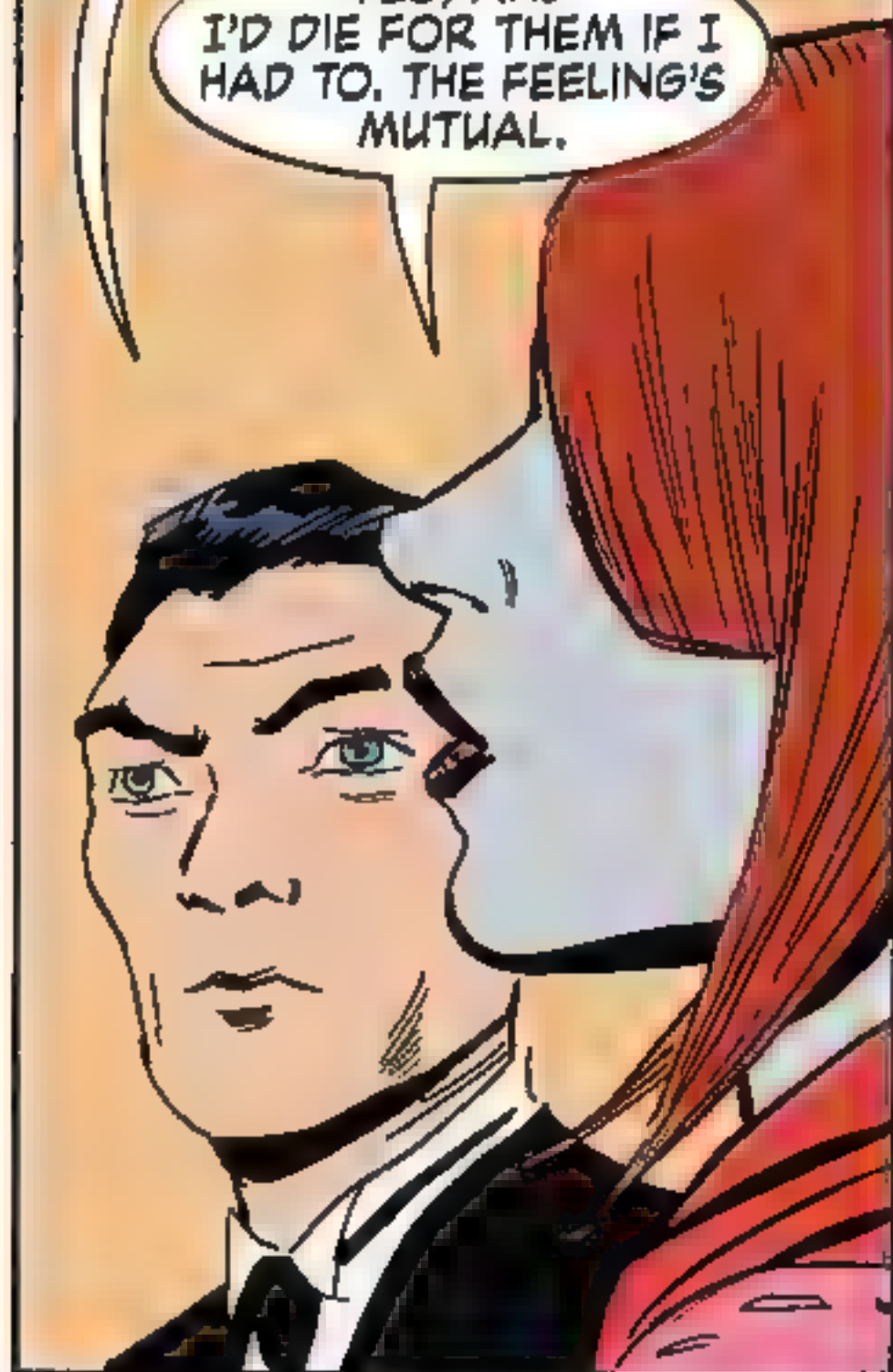


THE PARENTS OF
RAUL PINA, THE LAST OF
THE KIDNAPPED CHILDREN, SAID
THAT ALTHOUGH THIS WOULDN'T
BRING THEIR DEAD SON BACK, THEY
THANKED THE CITY'S CHAMPION
AND DEFENDER FOR AT LEAST
BRINGING RAUL'S KILLERS
TO JUSTICE.



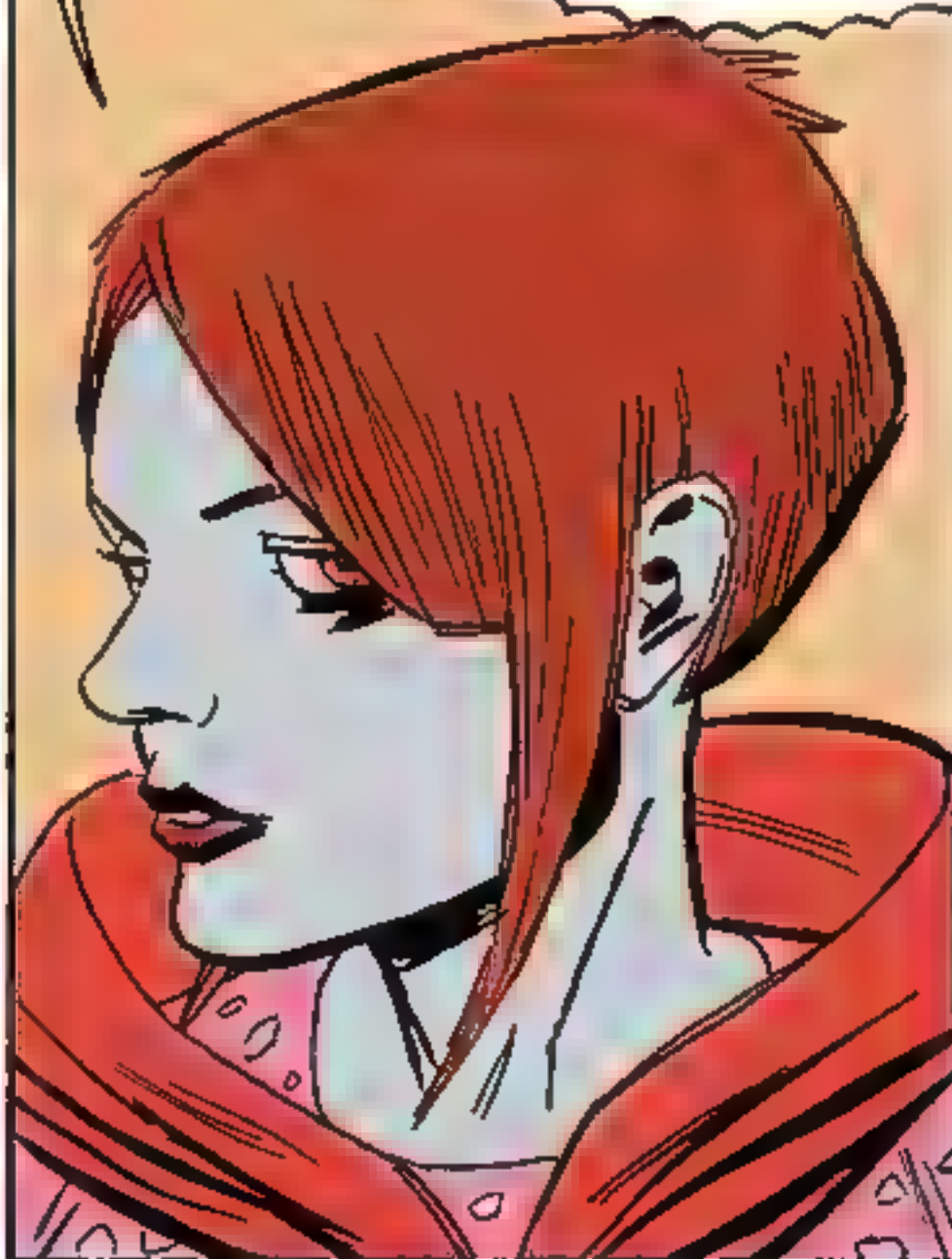
THEY LOVE YOU. THE PEOPLE OF
BARCELONA. I'M GLAD. I FEARED
FOR YOU WHEN WE...UH...FIRST
MET. THAT YOU'D BE CURSED WITH
AN EXISTENCE OF LONELY
SORROW, BUT IT'S NOT
LIKE THAT AT ALL.

YES, AND
I'D DIE FOR THEM IF I
HAD TO. THE FEELING'S
MUTUAL.

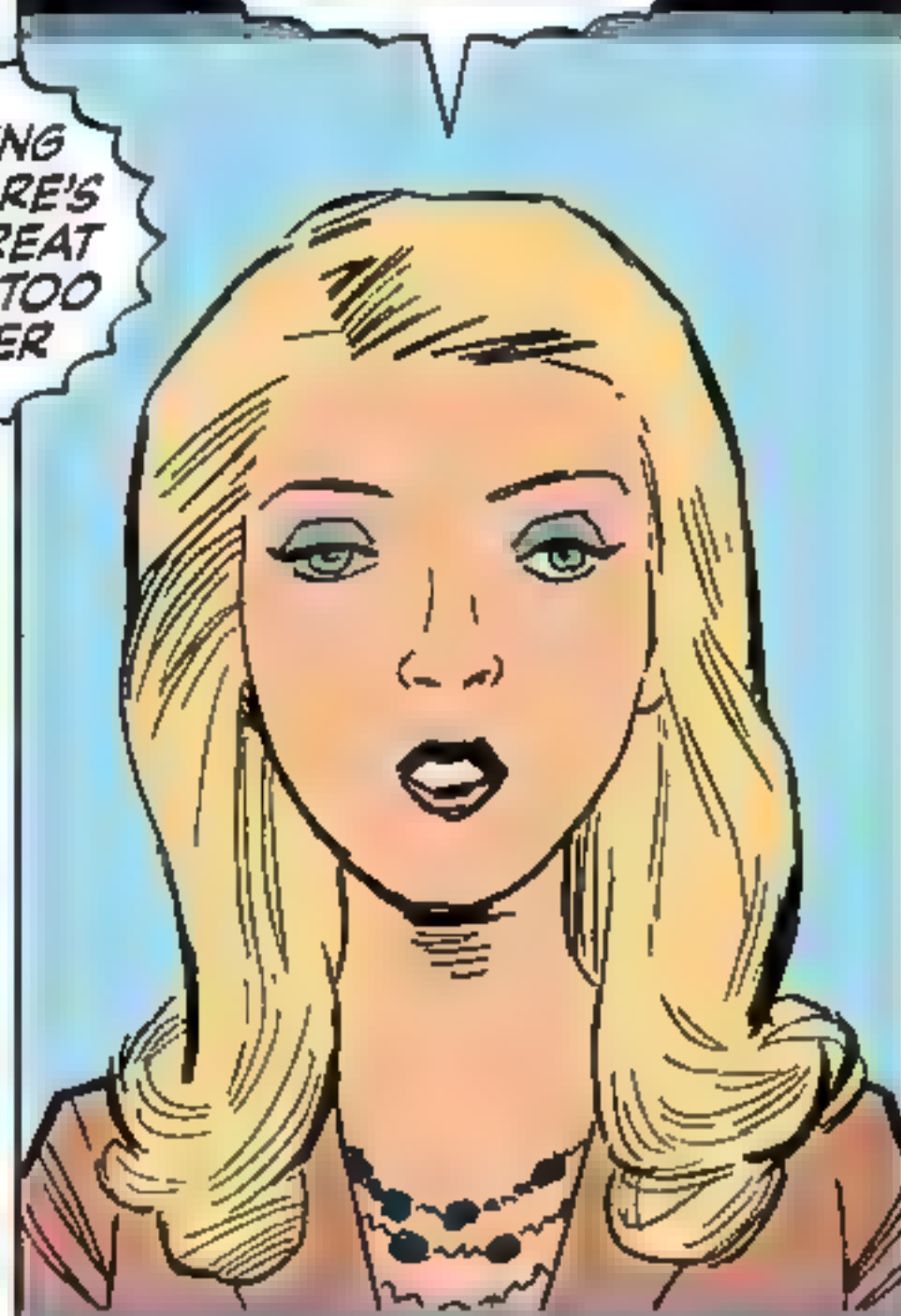


NOW, ABOUT YOU, FATHER.
YOUR BLOOD. THIS ALL SOUNDS
VERY MYSTERIOUS AND EXCITING.
TELL ME--NO...HOLD ON,
WAIT--

--AND ALMOST
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING
THE NEWS OF LA SANGRE'S
VICTORY, ANOTHER THREAT
HAS ARISEN, ONE ALL TOO
FAMILIAR TO BOTH HER
AND THIS CITY..



...THE
INQUISITOR HAS
RETURNED.



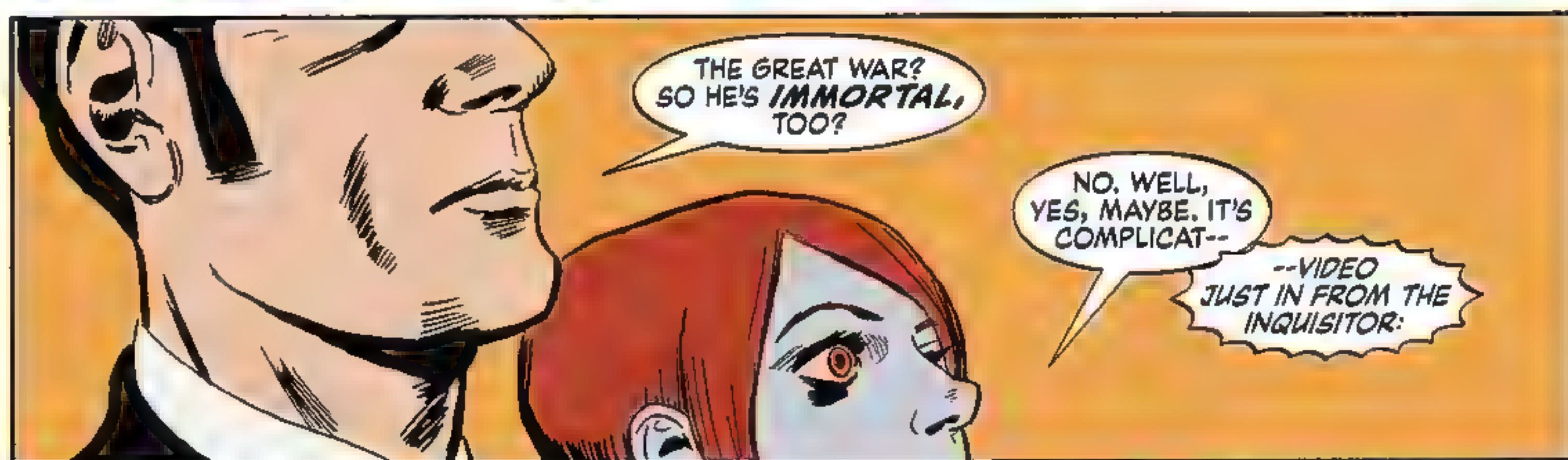
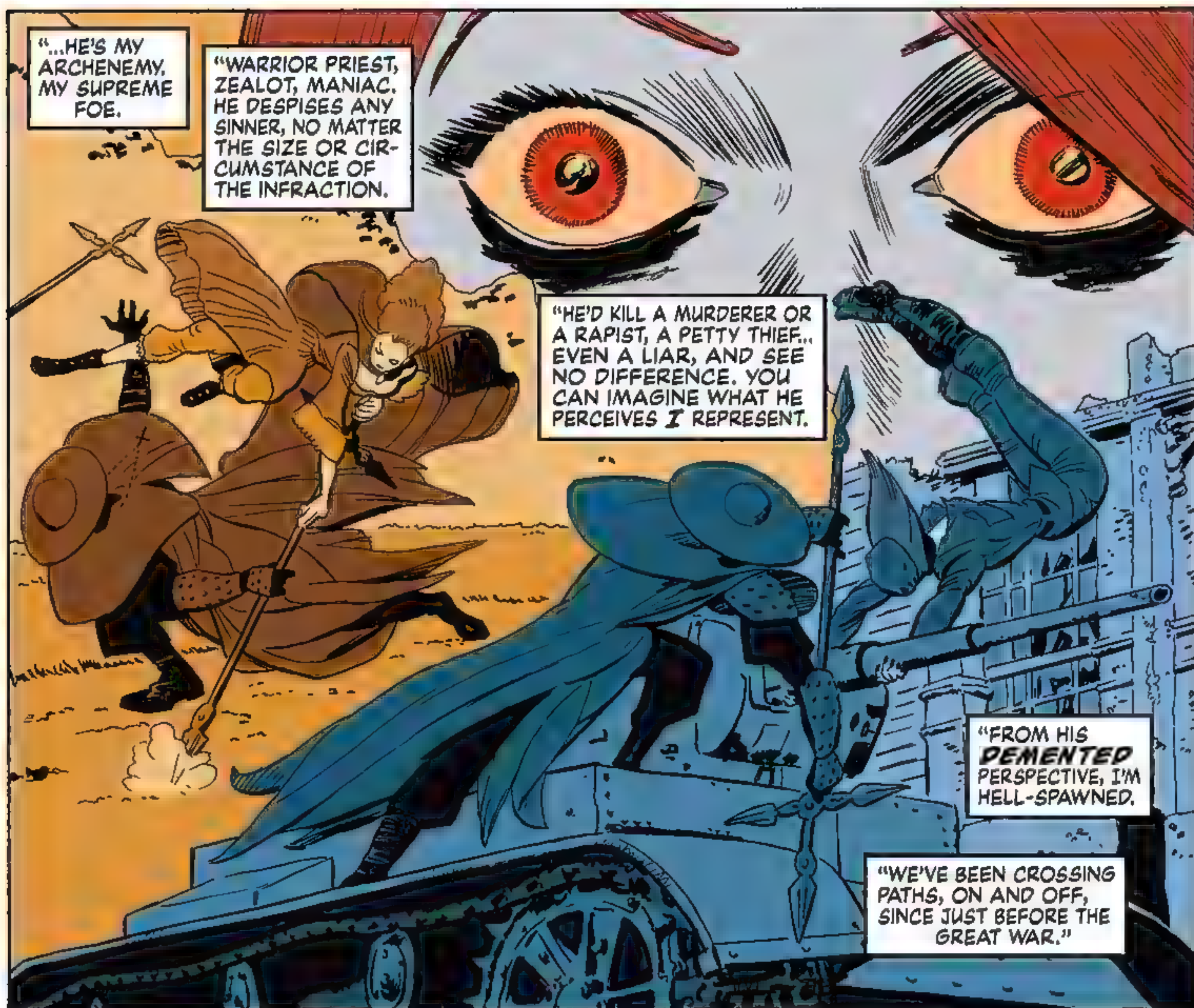
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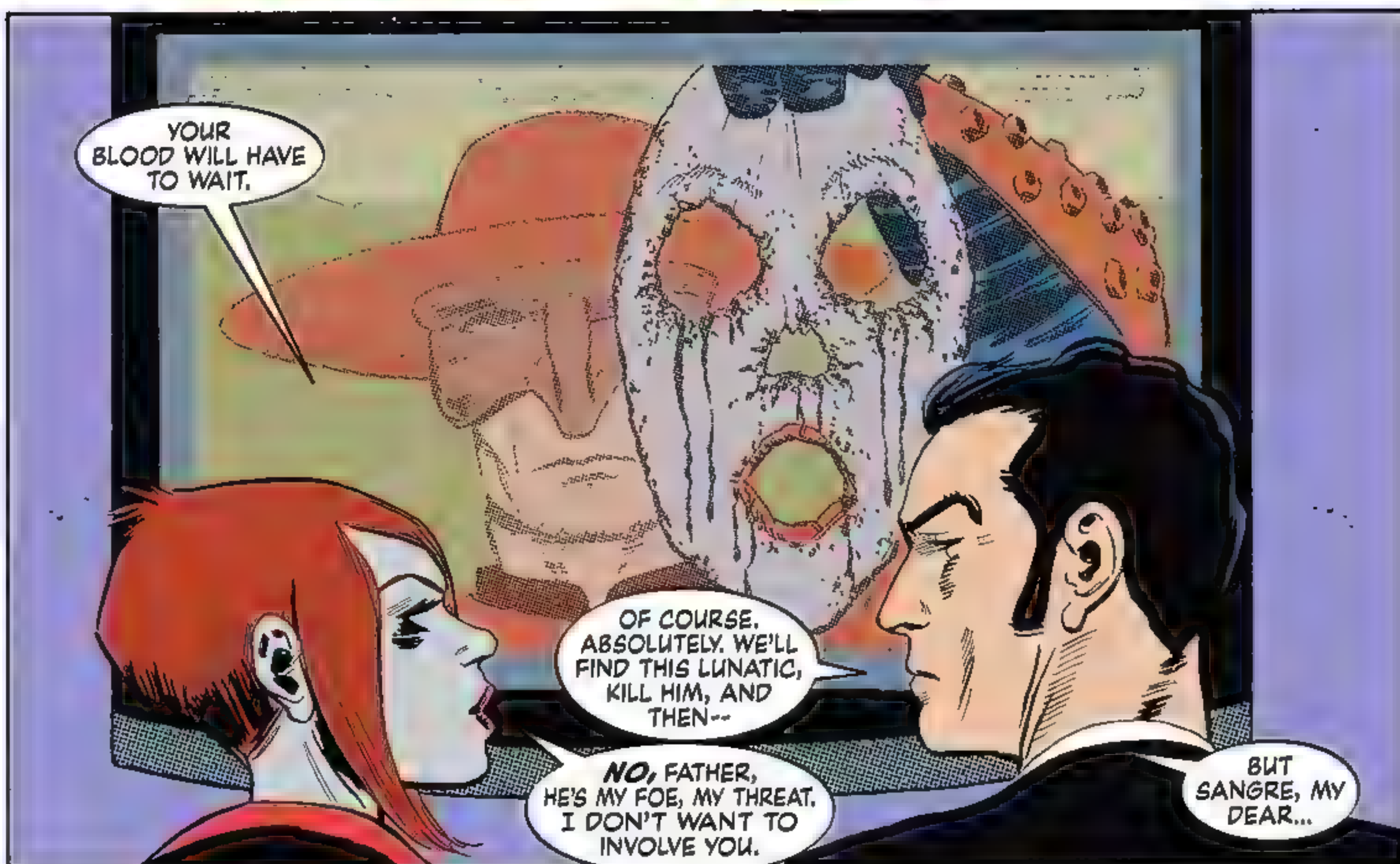
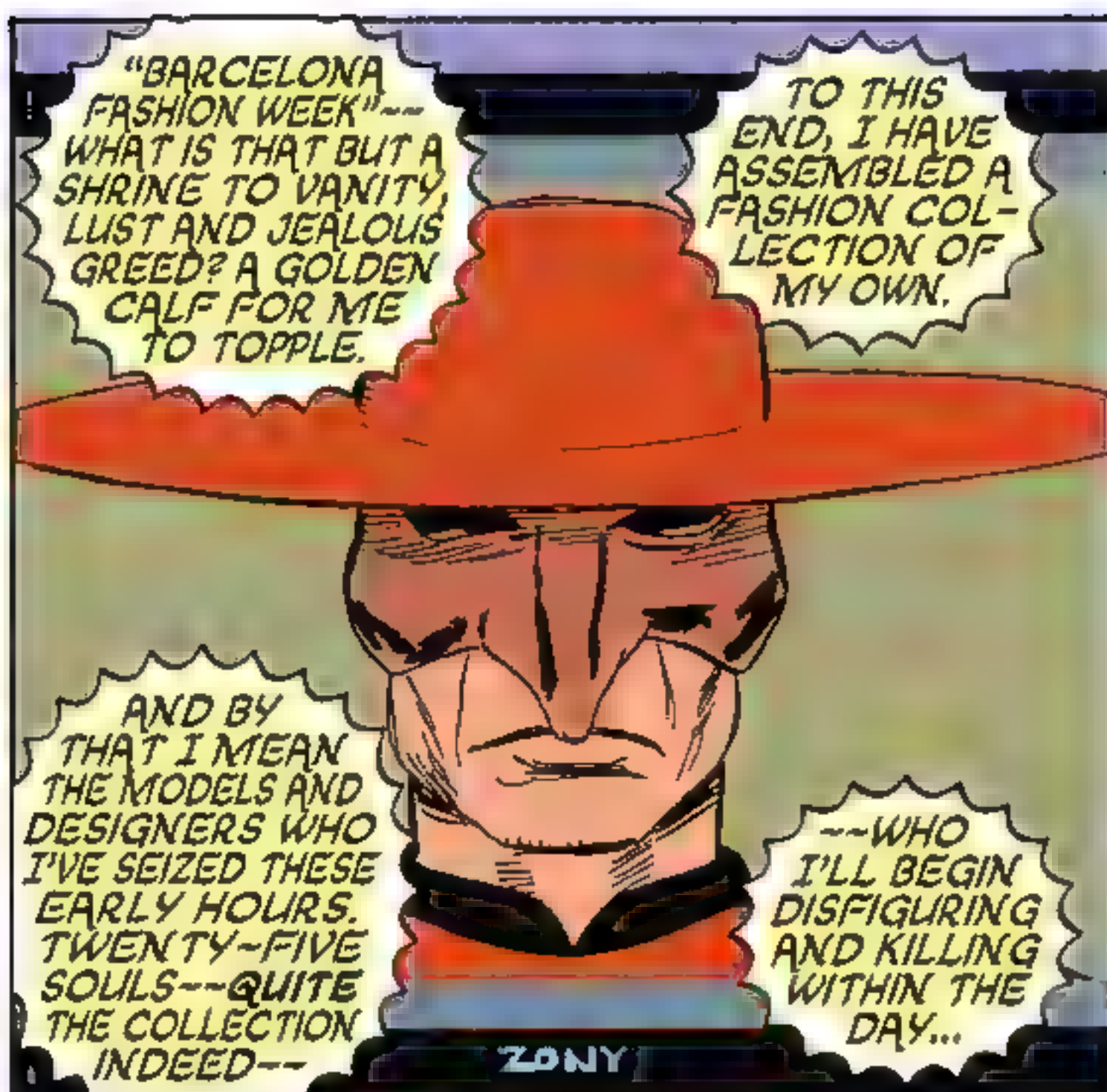
I SEE HER CHANGE. ALERT.
HER HANDS ARE SHAKING
BARELY, BUT

THIS FELLOW, HE'S--
YOU'VE MET HIM BEFORE,
YES? I RECALL READING TALES...
NEWS FROM SPAIN DOESN'T
REACH AMERICA SO READILY,
BUT I'M **SURE** I'VE HEARD
THE NAME.

THE
INQUISITOR...



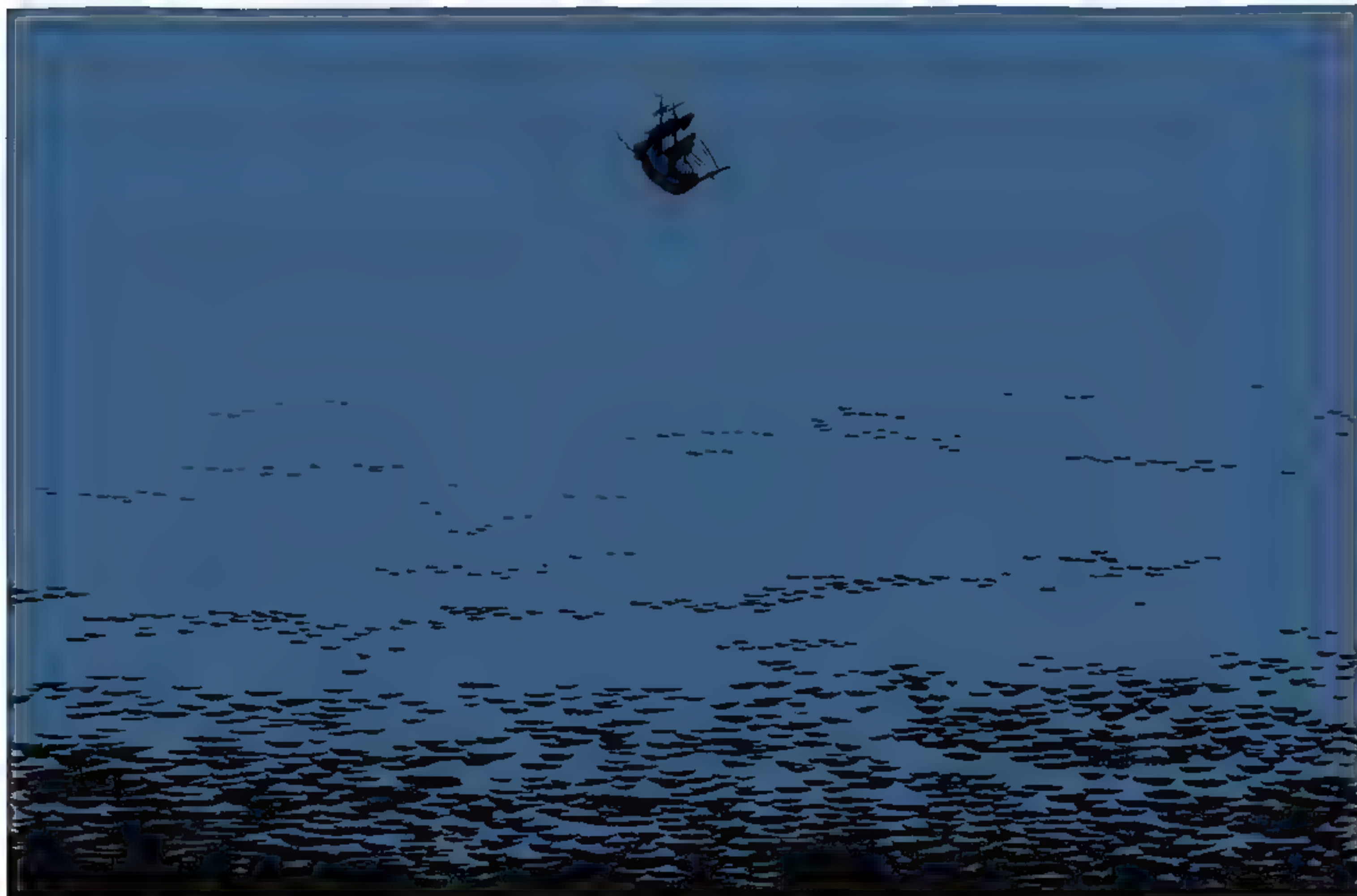




"...AREN'T I INVOLVED ALREADY?"

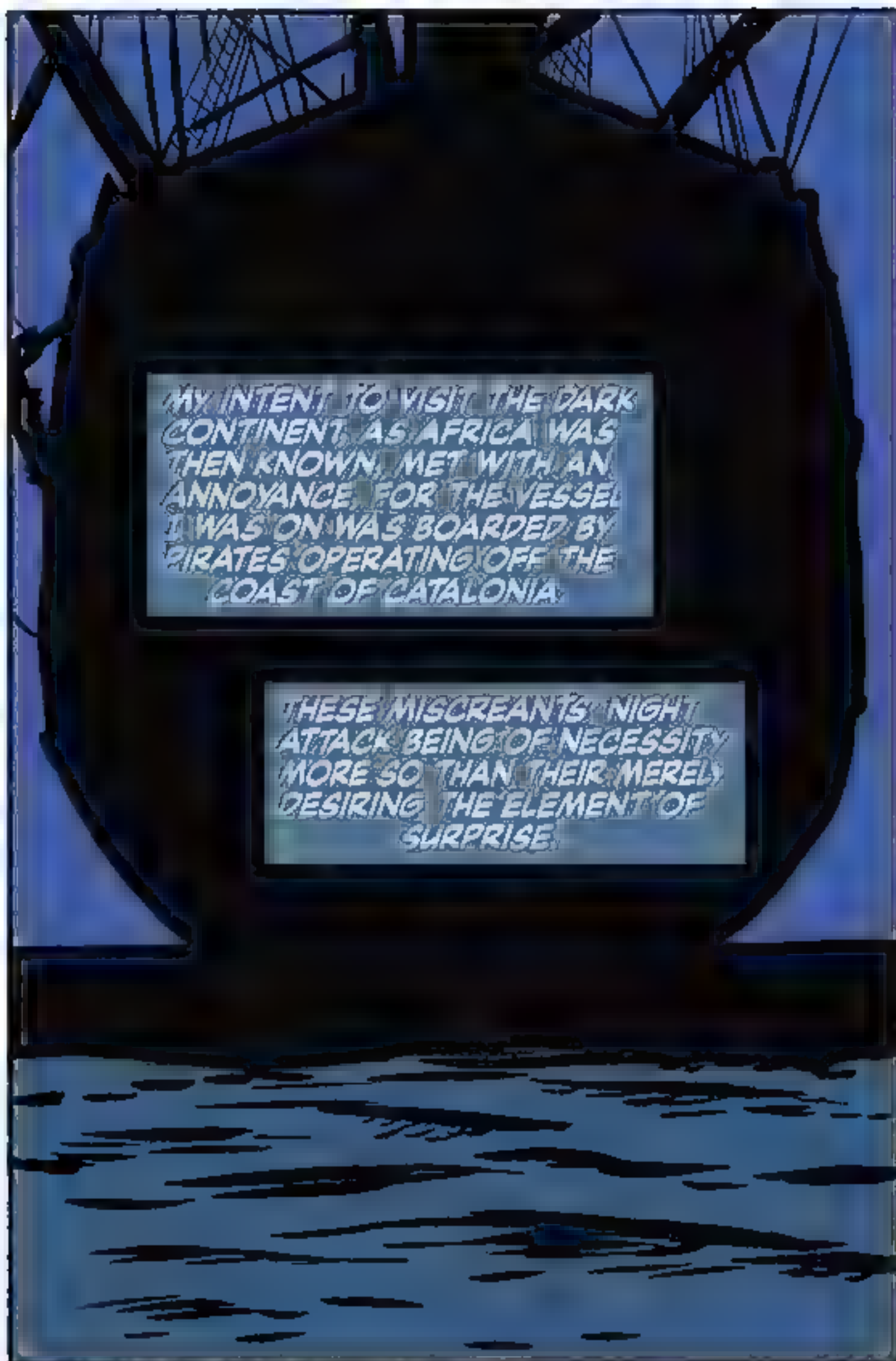
I SUPPOSE I SHOULD EXPLAIN SOME OF THIS. EH? LA SANGRE AND I.

FIRST, AS I'VE SAID TO HER AD NAUSEAM, I'M NOT HER FATHER, BUT IN LIGHT OF THE SINGULAR EVENTS SURROUNDING OUR FIRST MEETING, I SUPPOSE I UNDERSTAND HER INSISTENCE ON THE MATTER.



IT WAS 1854. I WAS THE SHADE BY THEN, YES, BUT AS DARNELL CORRECTLY STATED, I STILL HAD BLOOD FLOWING THROUGH ME

THAT WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE



MY INTENT TO VISIT THE DARK CONTINENT, AS AFRICA WAS THEN KNOWN, MET WITH AN ANNOYANCE, FOR THE VESSEL I WAS ON WAS BOARDED BY PIRATES OPERATING OFF THE COAST OF CATALONIA.

THESE MISCREANTS' NIGHT ATTACK BEING OF NECESSITY MORE SO THAN THEIR MERELY DESIRING THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.

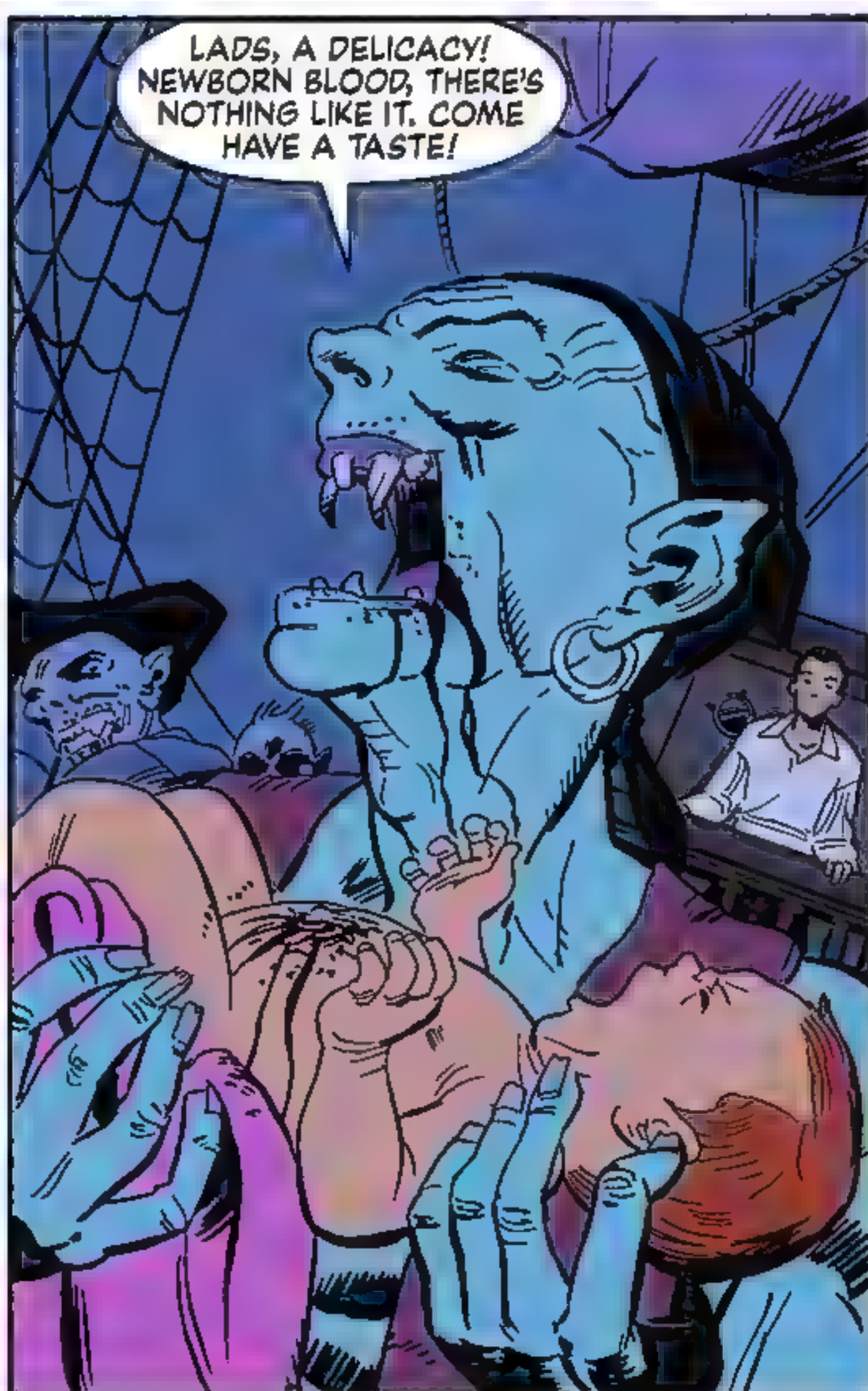


...FOR THEY WERE
VAMPIRES.

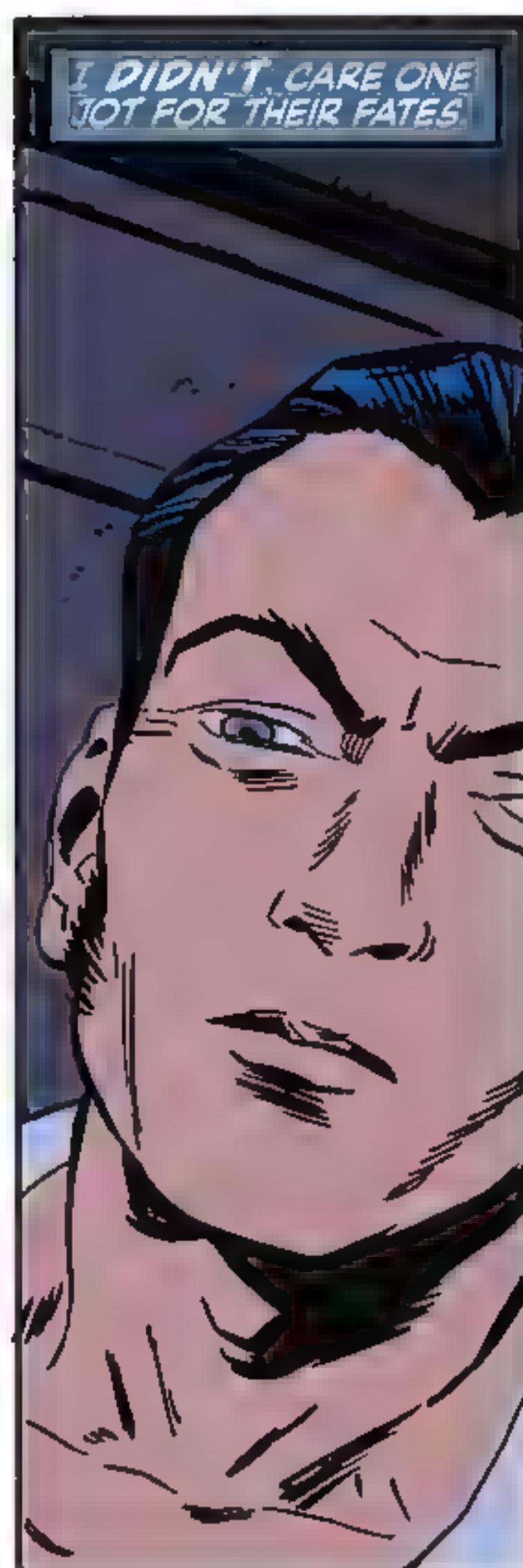
I WAS ROUSED FROM
SLUMBER BY THE SCREAMS
OF THE SHIP'S CREW AND
THOSE OF MY FELLOW
PASSENGERS--A JEWELER
FROM BILBAO, HIS WIFE
AND BABY DAUGHTER.



OF COURSE, BY
THIS POINT IN MY
EXISTENCE, MY
HEART WAS
COLD. DEAD.



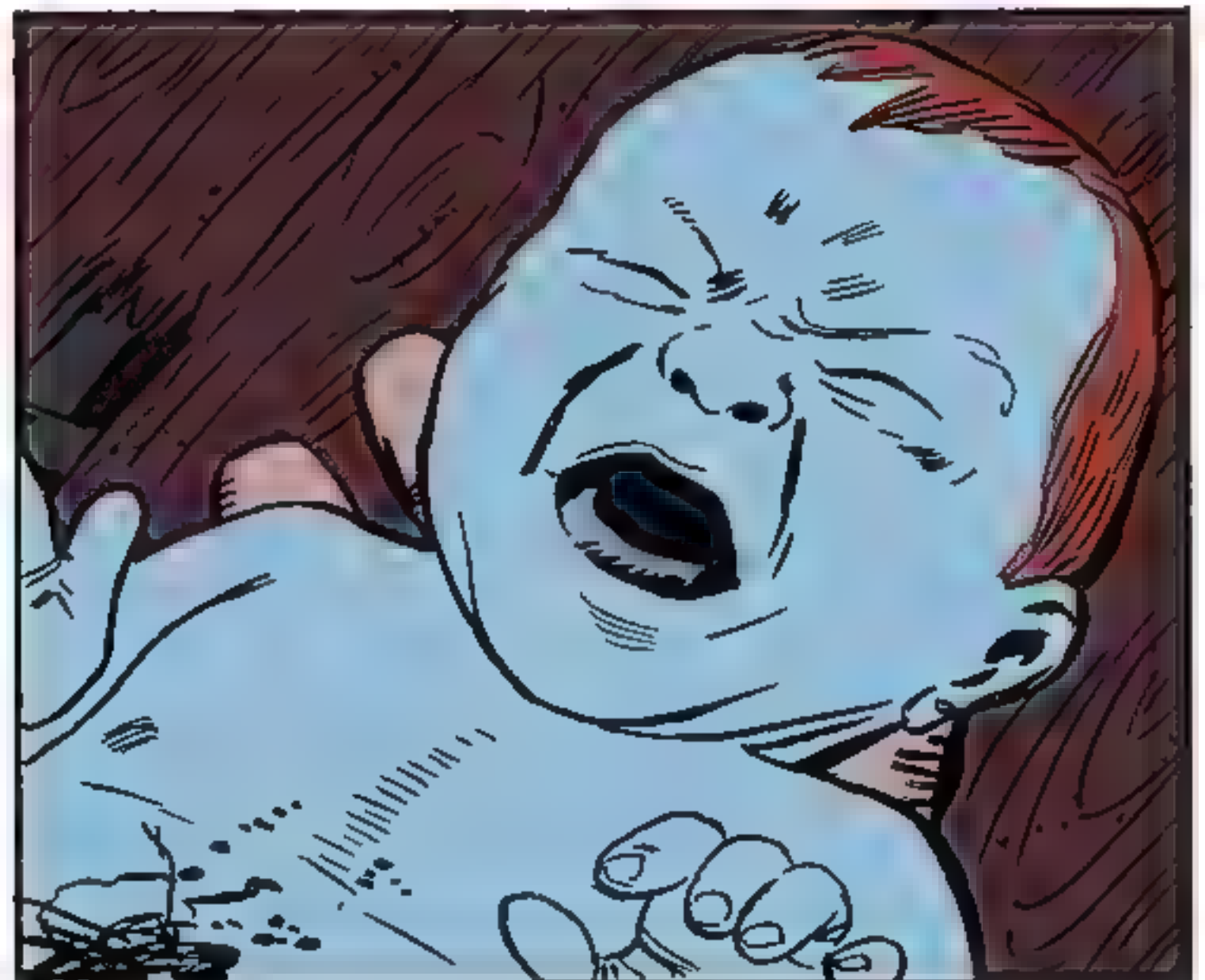
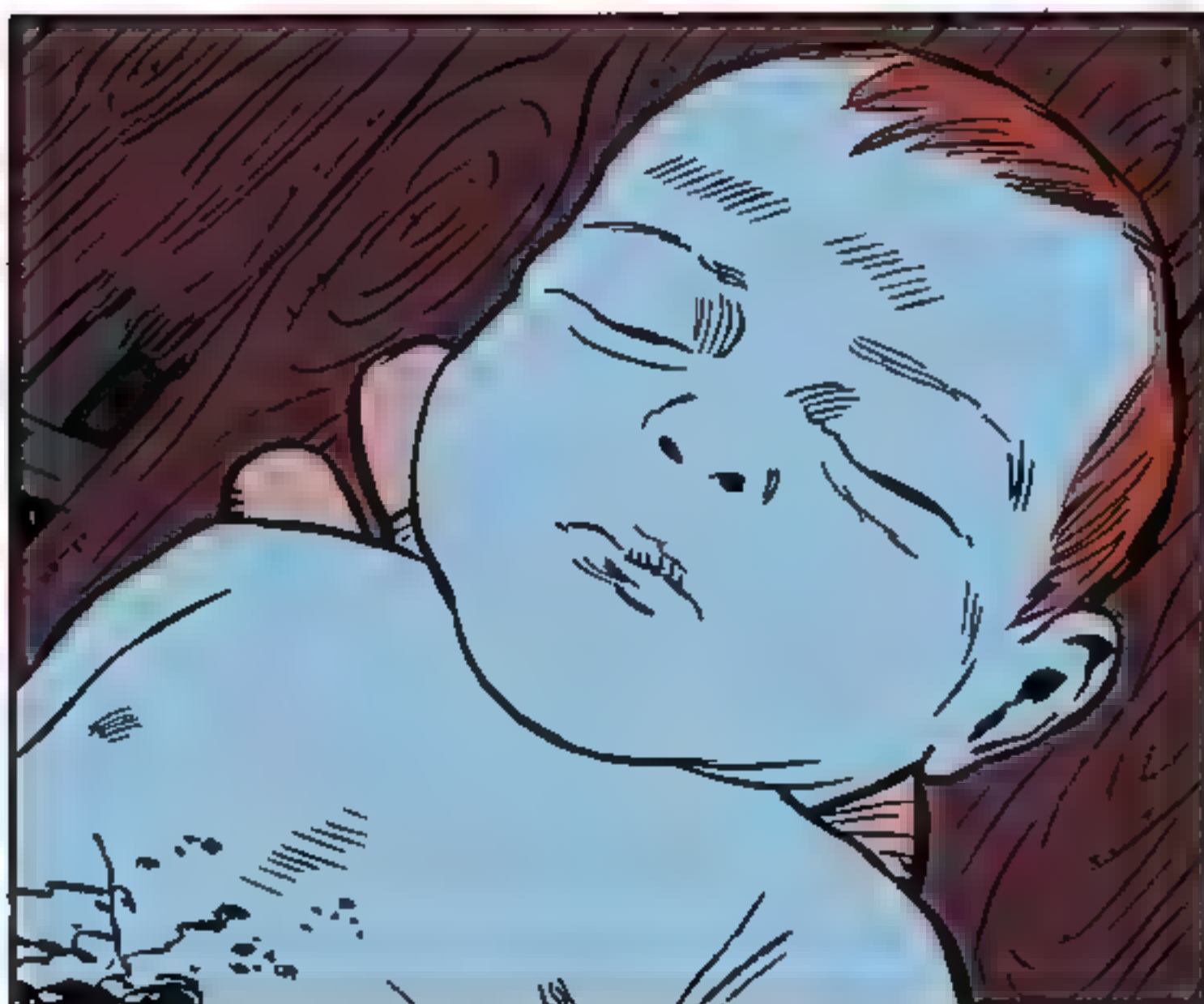
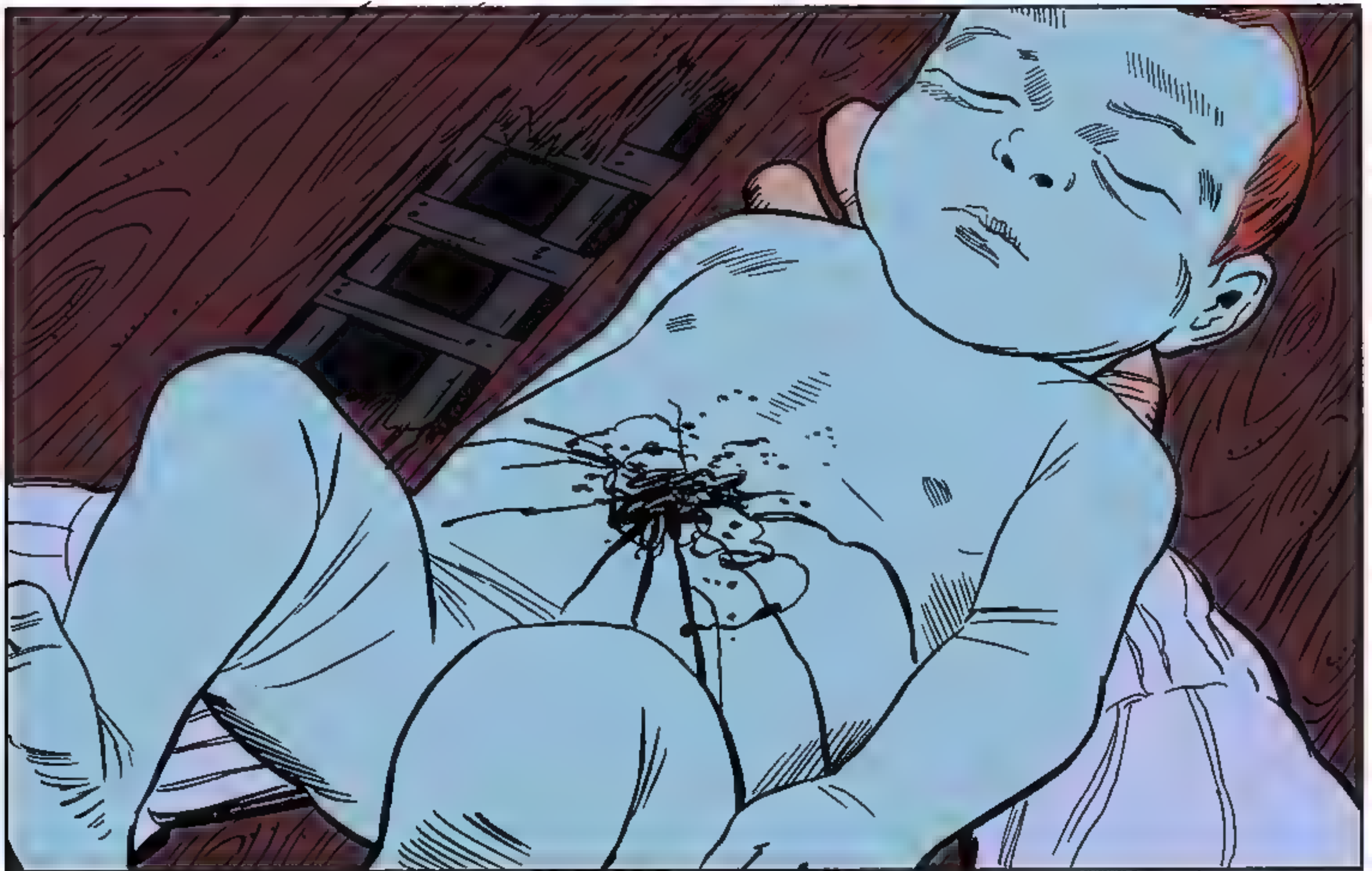
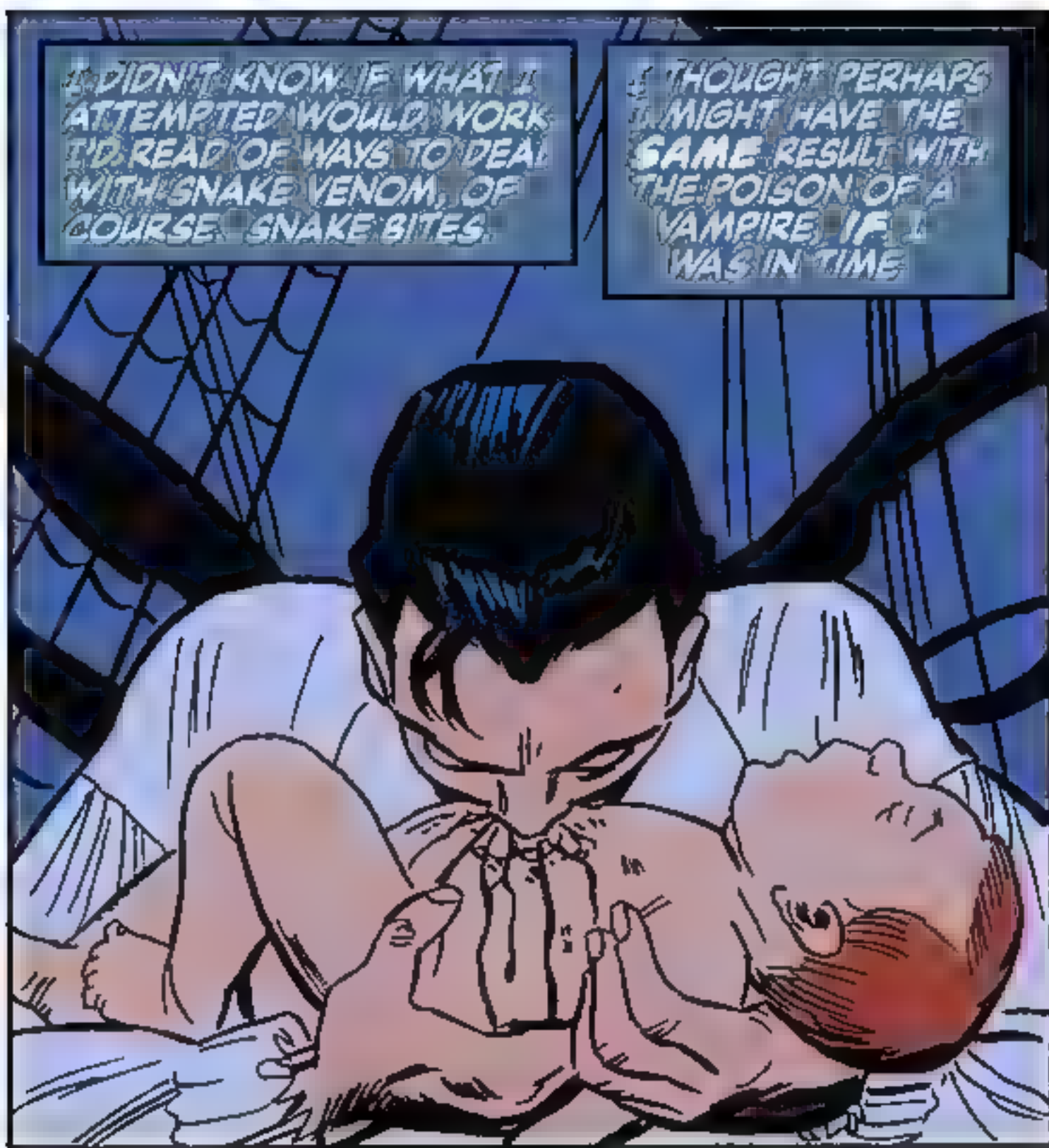
LADS, A DELICACY!
NEWBORN BLOOD, THERE'S
NOTHING LIKE IT. COME
HAVE A TASTE!



I DIDN'T CARE ONE
JOT FOR THEIR FATES.

NOT ONE TOT







GO ON,
HAVE A GOOD
OLD CRY.



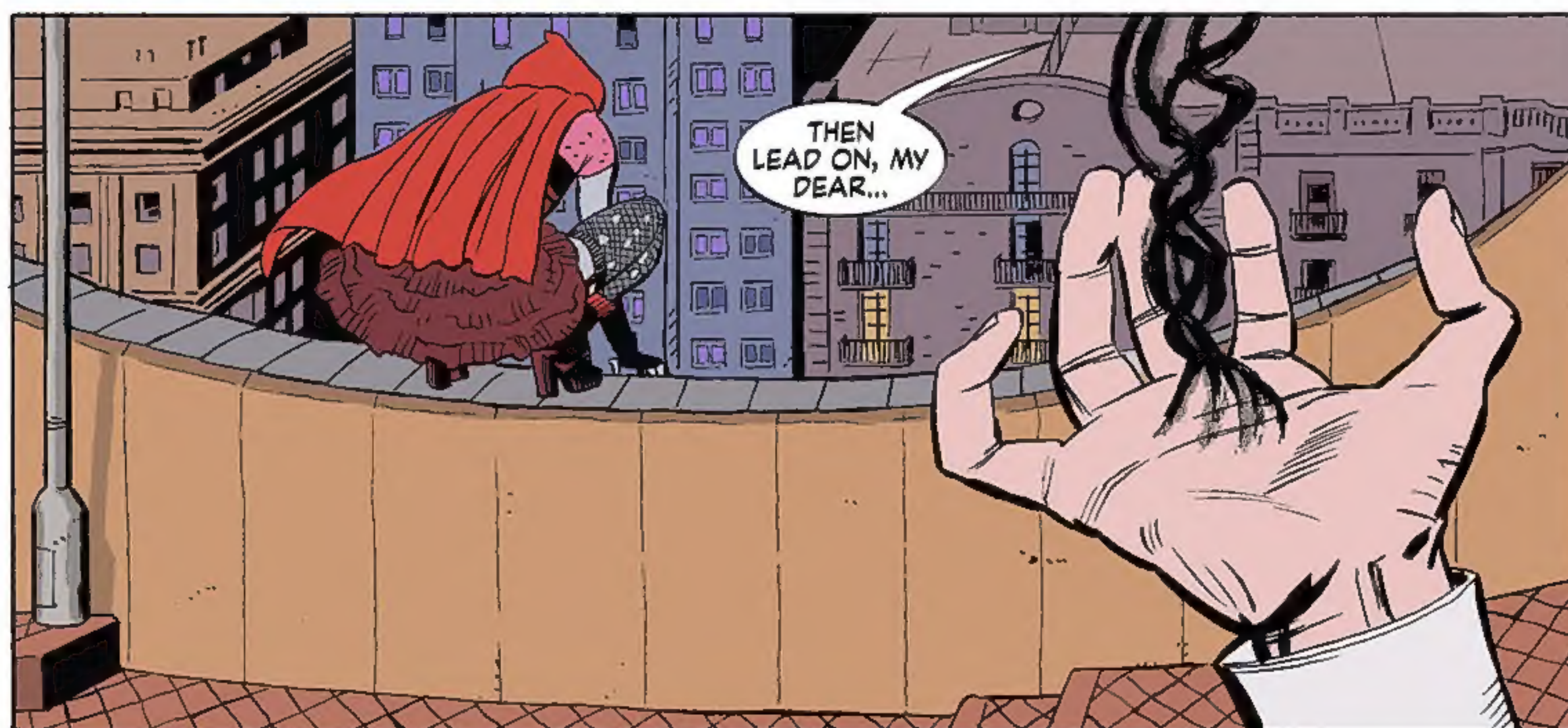
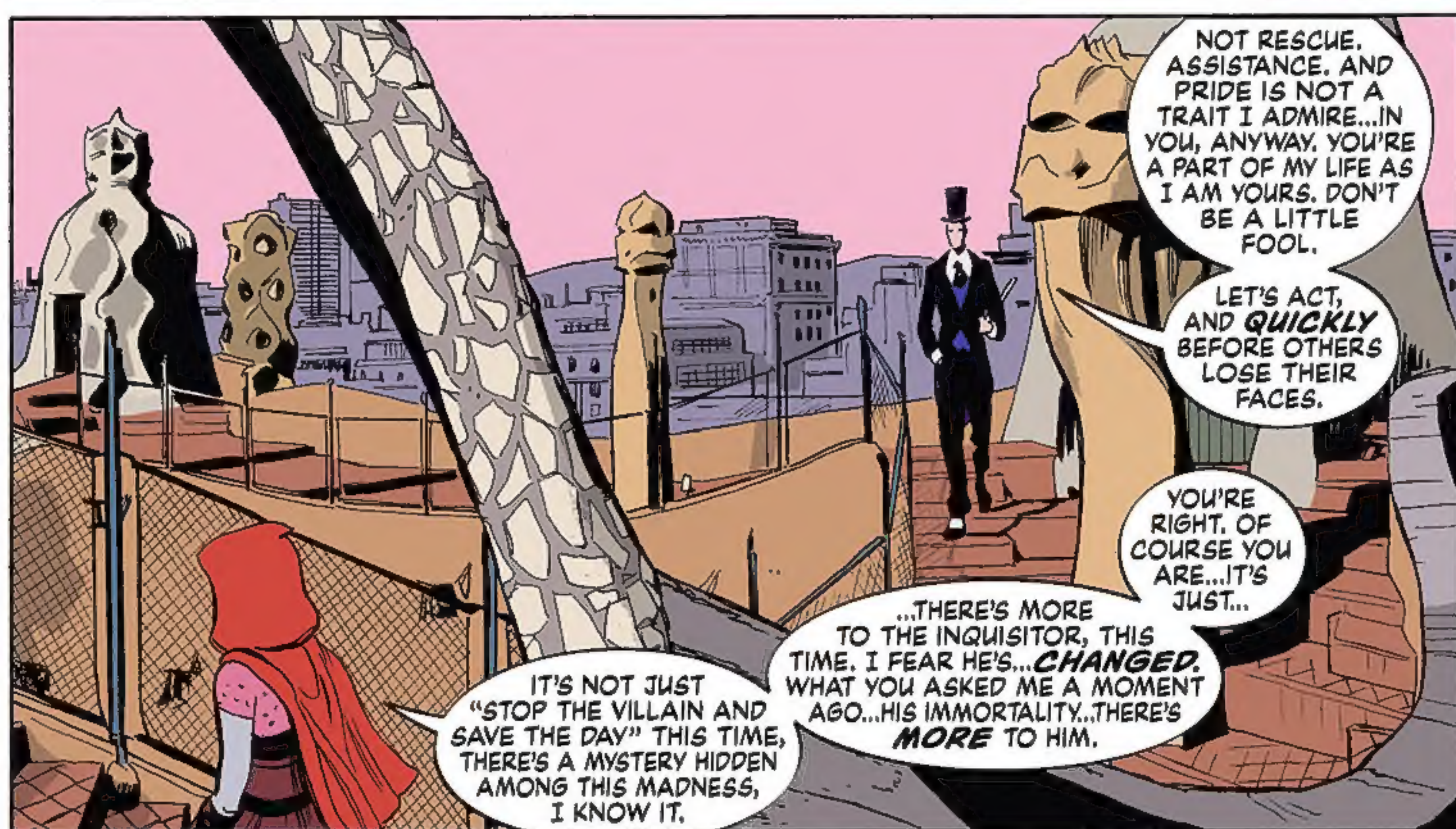
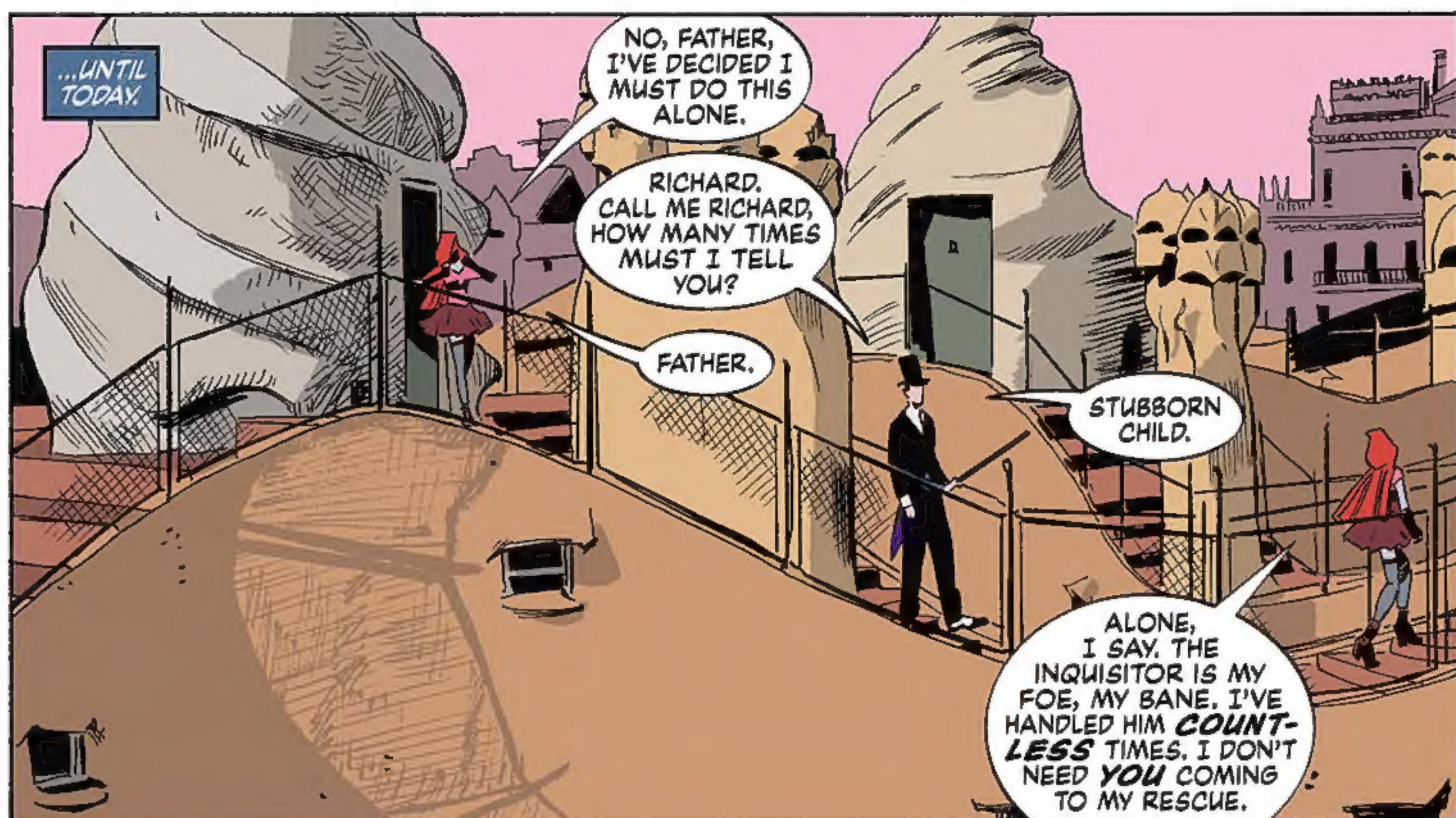
FOR YOU
HAVE LOST SO
MUCH.

THE BABY GREW, BUT AFTER APPROXIMATELY FIFTEEN YEARS STOPPED AGING ALTOGETHER. CHANGED BY THE VAMPIRE'S BITE, BUT **NOT** TO THE EXTENT SHE MIGHT HAVE HAD I NOT BEEN THERE.

AND I CHANGED, TOO. THAT WAS THE MOMENT MY BLOOD TURNED TO BLACKNESS. SOME ASPECT OF THE VAMPIRE TOXIN IN MY MOUTH...PERHAPS I HAD A BLEEDING GUM...PERHAPS, PERHAPS ALL **MANNER** OF POSSIBILITIES AND REASONS WHY.

IT MATTERS NOT.
OR AT LEAST IT
DIDN'T...







next issue:
MONTPELLIER!

FROM THE WRITER OF SUPERMAN &
JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

**JAMES
ROBINSON**

with **TONY HARRIS**

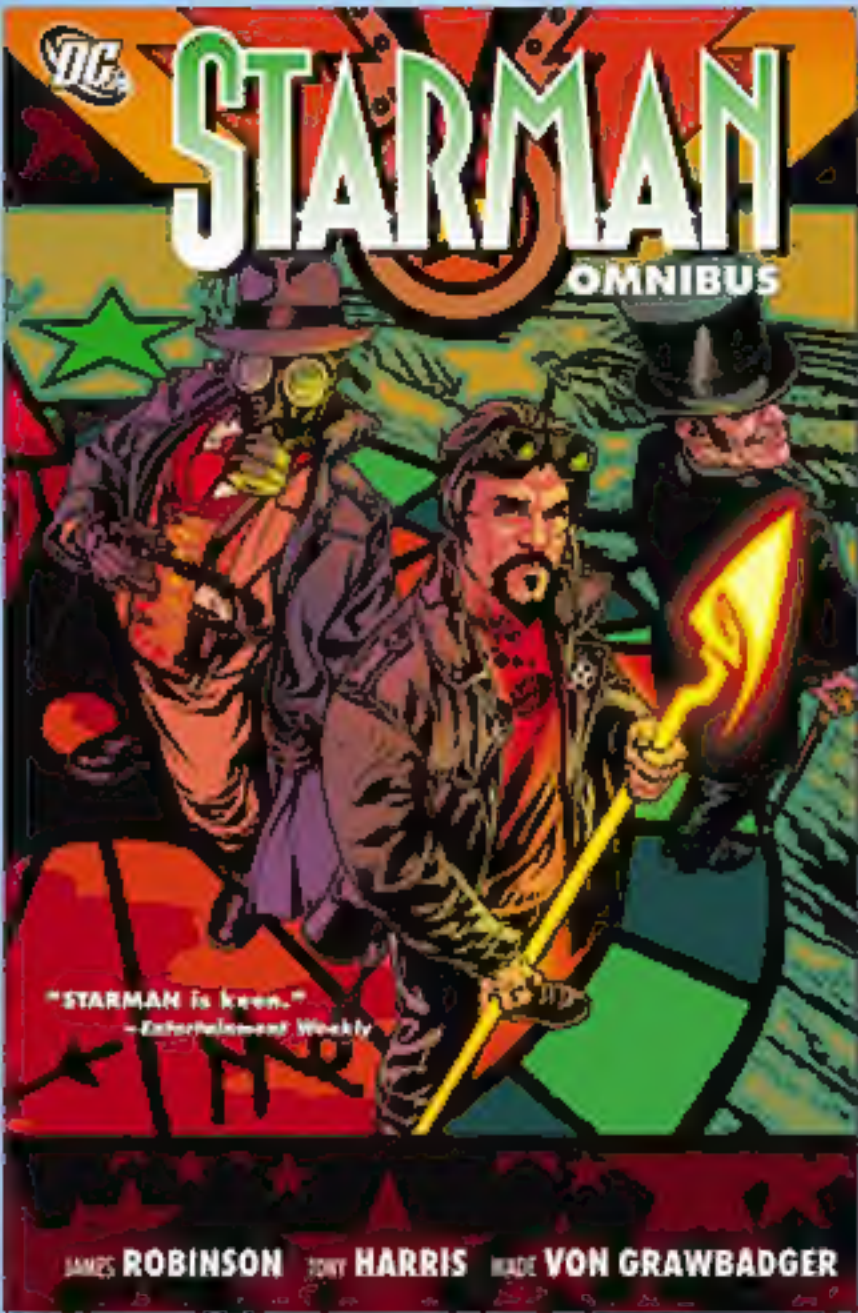
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- ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

*"What'll make THE STARMAN OMNIBUS
resonate with newcomers...is how well
[James] Robinson and [Tony] Harris
articulated the character of Jack Knight,
a slacker with idiosyncratic tastes and ideals that
didn't originate in any corporate boardroom."*
-THE ONION

- STARMAN OMNIBUS VOL. 1
- STARMAN OMNIBUS VOL. 2
- STARMAN OMNIBUS VOL. 3
- STARMAN OMNIBUS VOL. 4
- STARMAN OMNIBUS VOL. 5



STARMAN OMNIBUS
VOL. 2



with
TONY HARRIS

STARMAN OMNIBUS
VOL. 3



with
**TONY HARRIS
& others**

STARMAN OMNIBUS
VOL. 4



with
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